DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 181 552 EA 012 345

AUTHOR Hill, Frederick A., Jr.
TITLE Paterson's Partners for Progress. Joint Program Planning Committee Report #1. Parental/Community Involvement.
INSTITUTION Educational Funding Improvement Center Northeast, West Orange, N.J.: Educational Improvement Center of Northwest New Jersey, Morris Plains.
PUB DATE May 79
NOTE 55p.: Some appendices may be illegible

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Administrator Attitudes: *Community Involvement: Elementary Secondary Education: *Interagency Cooperation: Interviews: Parent Participation: Principals: School Community Relationship: Surveys
IDENTIFIERS New Jersey (Paterson)

ABSTRACT

This report presents preliminary steps taken in a program to increase parental and community involvement in the Paterson (New Jersey) public schools. It offers recommendations concerned with developing closer ties between the schools and the community. The publication begins with a brief description of the initiation of the program. It presents a review of the literature regarding parental and community involvement in the schools. It then presents an analysis of current community involvement in the Paterson schools. Results of interviews with principals and municipal officials concerning the schools are presented. The interviewees noted that community involvement is very low, and the principals interviewed felt that there should be more community involvement. The planning committee concluded that (1) the school board and city officials should issue a joint policy statement to increase interagency cooperation, (2) the schools should do more to meet the needs of adults, and (3) a community involvement staff development program should be initiated for principals. (Author/JM)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED181552

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

F. Hill, Jr.

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

PATERSON'S PARTNERS FOR PROGRESS

Joint Program Planning Committee Report #1 Parental/Community Involvement

EA 012 345

A Cooperative Project

Educational Improvement Center/Northwest
Thomas Hamill, Ed.D., Executive Director

Educational Improvement Center/Northeast
James Lewis Jr., Ph.D., Executive Director

PATERSON'S PARTNERS FOR PROGRESS
Joint Program Planning Committee
Report #1
Parental/Community Involvement

Prepared by

Frederick A. Hill, Jr. Ph.D.
Urban Research and Development Institute
Educational Improvement Center-Northeast

May, 1979

JOINT PROGRAM PLANNING COMMITTEE

Members:

Rev. Robert F. Kirchgessner
President, Board of Education

Mr. Lawrence F. Kramer
Mayor, City of Paterson

Mr. Frank Napier, Jr.
Superintendent, Paterson Board of Education

Mrs. Marian Rauschenback
President, City Council of Paterson

Staff:

Dr. Frederick Hill, Jr.
Project Director, Educational Improvement Center - Northeast

Mr. Louis R. Centolanza
Office of the Passaic County Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Anthony J. DeLellis
Educational Improvement Center - Northeast

Mr. James R. Phillips, Jr.
Research for Better Schools, Inc.

Mrs. Joan Welch
Paterson Board of Education

FOREWORD

Number one among the priorities currently being addressed by the New Jersey State Department of Education is to focus its resources on dealing with the unique and extraordinary needs of urban school districts. However, it was long ago realized that many of the problems of urban education were not the result of occurrences within the schools themselves, but were often times the offshoots of broader social and economic needs.

Thus, it was determined that to effectively deal with these problems, the co-operative participation and resources of the community as a whole must be brought to bear. Such a project has been developed and implemented in the City of Paterson, New Jersey; Partners for Progress.

The only program of its kind in the State of New Jersey, Paterson's Partners for Progress provides a mechanism for a planned program of action through which local governmental representatives, educators, lay leaders, and parents can cooperatively work for the improvement of education for the children of Paterson.

The pages of this report, document how the Educational Improvement Center/Northeast, and representatives of the Paterson community labored to produce a program, I feel, outstandingly demonstrates that broad segments of any community when banning together around a common objective, can achieve any worthwhile goal. Let us hope that this program will provide a springboard for the development of inter-community linkages in cities around the state, which will assist in the improvement of the quality of education available to all children.

I wish to acknowledge Deputy Commissioner of Education, Dr. Ralph Lataille, and Dr. Thomas Hamill, Executive Director of the Educational Improvement Center/Northwest for their assistance in the successful completion of this project.

In closing, I wish to express my gratitude to Mayor Lawrence F. Kramer, members of the Paterson City Council, Superintendent Frank Napier, Jr., and the Paterson Board of Education, for providing the Educational Improvement Center/Northeast, not only the opportunity of rendering its services to the City of Paterson, but providing the impetus for the development of a cooperative model of significance to urban areas across the nation.

James Lewis, Jr., Ph.D.
Executive Director
Educational Improvement Center/
Northeast

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

LAWRENCE F. KRAMER
MAYOR

CITY HALL, PATERSON, NEW JERSEY 07505 ☐ 881-3380

May 7, 1979

To The Citizens of Paterson:

There is no question that parents and other members of the community must become involved in the Paterson Public Schools if significant improvements are to be achieved. This report analyzes the status of parental/community involvement in the Paterson Public Schools and the extent to which there is potential for even greater involvement. Further, it offers recommendations, which can serve as a catalyst for those concerned with developing closer ties between the schools and their community.

On behalf of the citizens of Paterson, I join other members of the Joint Program Planning Committee in presenting this report. This is the first of a series of documents that will be forthcoming as the Joint Committee continues to address some of the major educational issues confronting Paterson today.

Sincerely,

Lawrence F. Kramer
Mayor

/b

v

BOARD OF EDUCATION
OF THE
CITY OF PATERSON

33 CHURCH STREET
PATERSON, NEW JERSEY 07505

FRANK NAPIER, JR.
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

May 11, 1979

We, the undersigned, are deeply appreciative of the report of the Joint Planning Committee of "Paterson's Partners for Progress." The stress upon parental involvement in all phases of the Paterson Board of Education's program recognizes the vital need for cooperation between our professionals and the community they serve. It is axiomatic that, as parental and community participation increases, so does support for the schools. This can only result in improved programs and, ultimately, greater student achievement.

As members of the Joint Program Planning Committee, we endorse this report and commend Dr. Fred Hill for its preparation. Our thanks to the Education Improvement Center, Northeast, for permitting his participation.

FRANK NAPIER, JR.
Superintendent of Schools

REVEREND ROBERT F. KIRCHGESSNER
President, Paterson Board of Education

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE CITY COUNCIL

CITY OF PATERSON

NEW JERSEY

May 15, 1979

TO THE CITIZENS OF PATERSON:

Ten months ago, a drive was started by the Paterson Superintendent of Schools, Frank Napier, to bring the Administrator and the Council of the City closer with the Schools' Board of Education and its Administrator.

The Seminar was the first of a series of meetings. We actually sat around the tables sharing information and understanding each other. Each session was well attended by all despite numerous other pressing committments.

The result of the meeting was the adoption of a program which will involve more parents in the neighborhood schools for their own continuing education and recreation along with that of their children. We are now devising means to bring this about by degrees. Meetings will be held between Councilmembers, The Department of Human Resources Staff and The School Athletic Department. Councilmembers have been invited to visit their District Schools and have responded.

We are hoping that there would be an opportunity to share this model with other Urban Centers.

Sincerely,

Marian Rauschenbach

Marian Rauschenbach
Council President

MR/cwj

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Pages
Foreword	ii
Introduction	1
Clarifying Issues	3
Reviewing the Literature	5
Analyzing In-District Activities	
A. Staff Interviews	7
B. Principals' Survey	8
C. Principals' Interviews	10
D. Municipal Officials' Interviews	12
E. Summary of In-District Activities	18
Conclusions and Recommendations	20
Comments	22
Appendix	

LIST OF TABLES

		Pages
Table I:	Actual and Ideal Parental/Community Involvement in the Schools	9
Table II:	Means of Facilitating Parental/Community Involvement	11

INTRODUCTION

During his tenure as Superintendent of the third largest school district in New Jersey, Mr. Frank Napier, Jr. has introduced several innovations designed to improve education in Paterson. Mr. Napier has gained support for these initiatives, not only from the Board of Education, administrators, teachers, parents and pupils, but also from the Mayor of the City of Paterson. In addition, Mayor Kramer has been known to intervene on his own, when circumstances warranted it. For example, in 1977 when the district's low Educational Assessment Program (EAP) test results were made public, Mayor Kramer demanded and received the resignation of several members of the Board of Education. He appointed a new Board, which in turn passed the Panitz recommendation which reads:

> Commencing with June, 1980, the superintendent of the Paterson school district shall certify for graduation from high school only those students who have reached the twelfth-grade level in the basic subjects required for graduation with discretion permitted for handicapped and emotionally disturbed students. [1]

Superintendent Napier and his staff were eager to reach this target. However, they recognized that many changes would first need to take place. They questioned whether the Board of Education, the Mayor, or the City Council were fully aware of what might be required even in the way these officials interfaced on school-related matters. At the

---

[1] The Panitz recommendation is recorded in the minutes of the Paterson Board of Education's regular monthly meeting, May 5, 1978.

time, there did not seem to be an effective way to formally and publicly mobilize these resources without raising the spectre of political interference.

In the Spring of 1978 Superintendent Napier took steps to bring about a closer working relationship between key elected municipal officials, and the Commissioners and staff of the Board of Education. As a result, Paterson's Partners for Progress was developed in consultation with Dr. Frederick Hill, Jr. of the Urban Research and Development Institute - Educational Improvement Center-NE. This unique venture is a year-long "Program of Planned Action", which: (1) familiarizes key decision-makers -- the Mayor and members of the City Council -- with the progress and prospects for improving education in Paterson; and (2) provides a framework in which educators and key lay leaders can formally and publicly work together to carry out the responsibilities of their offices.

The Program began in the summer of 1978. A two-day seminar was conducted, which presented participants with an in-depth view of how the Superintendent and his staff were moving to improve education in Paterson. Mayor Lawrence F. Kramer opened the second day's session by identifying areas of overlapping responsibilities shared by his office and the Board of Education. At the top of his list was Parental/Community Involvement. The seminar participants agreed with Mayor Kramer's assessment. Further, they felt that the list of concerns should be tackled collectively.

Plans for full implementation of Paterson's Partners for Progress

were reviewed, and a schedule of events prepared. The Joint Program Planning Committee was established, composed of Superintendent Napier, Jr.; Board President Robert F. Kirschgessner; Mayor Lawrence F. Kramer; and City Council President Marion Rauschenback. Dr. Hill was given the responsibility for convening the Committee meetings and seeing to it that the necessary staff work was carried out.

During its initial meeting, the Joint Committee approved a twelve step program for "The Year of Planned Action." In addition, it adopted a modus operandi for:

1. Establishing priorities of work
2. Clarifying issues
3. Conducting literature searches and reviews
4. Analyzing in-district activities
5. Comparing findings and preparing reports including policy/ program recommendations.

The top priority concern of the Joint Committee was "Parental/ Community Involvement." This report is a detailed summary of the Joint Committee's activities related to this concern.

CLARIFYING ISSUES

The Public School Education Act of 1975 provides for a thorough and efficient system of free public schools. The Bill requires school districts to involve citizens as integral partners in the operation of the schools. It reads in part:

> A thorough and efficient system of education includes local school districts in which decisions pertaining to the hiring and dismissal of personnel, the curriculum of the schools, the establishment of district budgets, and other essentially local education questions, are made democratically with a maximum of citizen involvement and self-determination and are consistent with statewide goals, guidelines and standards...[2]

Paterson, like many big city districts, has found it difficult to sustain community involvement. Although the T&E legislation encouraged community out-reach programs, the effects were not perceived by some community leaders. Consequently, in the Spring of 1978 a citizen group in Paterson pressed a suit against the Paterson Board of Education charging it with violating both the letter and spirit of the T&E law. Women for Political Action (WPA) alleged that parents and other members of the community were not provided adequate opportunities to participate in and comment on the development of the district's goals.

The suit is expected to be settled out of court. Nevertheless, since the law requires citizen involvement in other key specified areas, it is possible that additional challenges concerning citizen involvement are in the offing. Further, since the law does not limit community participation to only those areas specified, it is necessary to develop operational definitions of "maximum citizen involvement" to suit a variety of activities. As these definitions are put into effect, care must be taken to exercise local options in ways that do not aggravate existing sensitivities.

---

[2] T&E: A Primer for School Improvement in New Jersey (3rd Revision), Trenton: New Jersey State Department of Education, 1977, p. 17.

REVIEWING THE LITERATURE

Mr. James Phillips, Research for Better Schools, Inc. spearheaded a review of the literature. His team was interested in seeing how various districts opted to involve their communities in public education. Mr. Phillips reported that much of the literature emphasized community problem-solving and concerned itself with justifications for and approaches toward creating alternatives to traditional avenues for this type of involvement. Often, these took the form of city or district-wide boards, councils, or task forces, which functioned in advisory capacities. Members were either elected or chosen because of their prominent status in the community.

Mr. Phillips found a sparsity of objective research on community involvement to effect basic skills improvement. Despite this, he noted that HEW Secretary Joseph Califano has stated authoritatively that "the family plays a crucial role in educational achievement." Therefore, HEW will support and develop programs which "reinforce classroom learning" and "encourage parents to follow their children's progress in school." The Wake County Public School System's Parent Involvement Pilot Project (PIP) is an example of such a program.[3] Mr. Phillips told the Joint Committee that the Project was exemplary because it "is actually being implemented, monitored, and evaluated" and "seeks to ad-

---

[3]See attached Brochure describing the essential features of the Project, (Appendix A.)

dress some of the same needs identified in Paterson as essential." Mr. Phillips indicated that he would keep the Joint Committee informed of the project as it progressed.

Dr. Anthony DeLellis, Community Education Specialist for the Educational Improvement Center - Northeast also headed a literature review team. He reported that there are basically three community involvement strategies, which school districts commonly employ.[4] These strategies are:

1. The Parent Impact Model -- attempts to involve parents and other community members in the activities of the school as a means of improving and/or reinforcing students' educational experiences. This model might employ parents as tutors, teacher's aides, volunteer resource personnel or supervisors of homework.
2. The School Impact Model -- strives to extend the use of the school facility to include programs of interest to parents and other adult members of the community. This model is typified by adult education programs, arts and crafts classes, recreational and other leisure time activities, and/or the use of school buildings as meeting places for various social and civic minded organizations.
3. The Community Impact Model -- utilizes the school as a vehicle for rallying support for the improvement of a variety of cir-

---

[4] Elsa Angell, "Students Benefit When Parents Are Involved, Research Shows," ASCD News Exchange, May, 1978, p.10.

cumstances affecting the local environment which may or may not be school-related.

The Joint Committee decided that both the Parent Impact and the School Impact Models are most applicable to Paterson. The Committee is particularly interested in the School Impact Model because in addition to placing a great deal of emphasis on citizen participation and expanded use of school facilities, the model also promotes inter-agency cooperation and effective use of resources.

The Committee charged Dr. Hill with responsibility for ensuring that all analyses of in-district activities reflected an awareness of these two models. In this way all in-district activities would be examined relevant to the extent to which they facilitate parental/community involvement in the learning process, in school community problem-solving, in goal development, in curriculum revision, in personnel selection, and in budgetary processes as well as other significant areas of focus.

ANALYZING IN-DISTRICT ACTIVITIES

A. Staff Interviews

Mr. Louis Centolanza, Office of the Passaic County Superintendent of Schools, conducted group interviews of the district's teaching staffs. The professional staff indicated that parental/community involvement is almost non-existent. The staffs reported that the Community's image of the Paterson Public Schools tends to be negative and that the public believes that the quality of education is in a state of rapid decline - a decline fast approaching crisis pro-

portions. The teachers speculate that the recent news accounts of low test scores, violence and vandalism, and ineffective management of resources has been a contributory factor in this decline. There seems to be an absence of effective means to counter-balance the negative effects of these distortions even among those who do not normally rely on secondary sources of information. The staffs are alarmed by increases in private school enrollments; particularly, among children with middle-class family backgrounds. The teachers believe this suggests that those who tend to be most involved and knowledgeable about the functioning of their schools, are becoming less inclined to support local public education.

B. Principals' Survey

Dr. Hill and Mrs. Joan Welch, Paterson Internal Change Agent Team (ICAT), surveyed principals to determine to what extent and in what ways community involvement is supported both actually and ideally. The twenty-nine respondents indicated that parents and other community members rarely, if ever, are actually involved in significant school-related activities on a wide scale. For example, on a scale of 1 to 4 (1 indicating "never" and 4 indicating "frequently"), parental and other community members' involvement in the T&E functions of personnel selection, allocation and expenditure of school funds, and curriculum revision is rated 1.14, 1.67., and 1.93 respectively. As Table I shows, the level of actual involvement is rated somewhat higher when it comes to participating in the development of school goals (2.82). The data indicate that parents

and other community members are more often involved in school goal-setting than in any other activity.

TABLE I
Actual and Ideal Parental/Community Involvement in the Schools

Areas of Involvement	Levels of Involvement	
	Actually Occurs	Ideally Occurs
1. Parents or other community members participate in the selection of local school personnel.	1.14	2.31
2. Parents or other community members influence the allocation and expenditure of school funds.	1.67	2.96
3. Parents or other community members study the local school curriculum and work for needed changes.	1.93	3.54
4. Parents or other community members develop the goals of the local school.	2.82	3.46
5. Parents or other community members assess local educational needs.	2.68	3.78
6. Parents or other community members participate in solving school-community problems.	2.57	3.57

When asked, principals indicate that parents and other community members ideally should be highly involved in such activities as:

1. Needs assessment (3.78)
2. School-community problem-solving (3.57)
3. Curriculum revision (3.54); and
4. Goal development (3.46)

However, when the concerns are allocation and expenditure of school

funds (2.96) and the selection of school personnel (2.31), principals believe that parents and other community members should be involved, less than on a "sometimes" basis, at best.

C. Principals' Interviews

The principals' survey data reveals some other interesting observations. For example, seven principals tend to indicate that parents and other members of the community are already "frequently" involved in those activities in which their peers feel the community should be highly involved; namely, needs assessment, school-community problem-solving, curriculum revision, and goal development. These principals were subsequently interviewed to determine how they facilitate frequent parental involvement in the Paterson Public Schools.

The seven selected principals were asked to identify the means by which parents and other community members involve themselves with the schools. The vehicles sighted most often by this group of principals were the T&E Steering Committees, the individual parents working on their own behalf, and the PTA/PA's. Upon close examination of Table II we see:

1. Building T&E Steering Committees are identified by each interviewee as the most effective means of securing parental/community involvement in the development of the school goals. In addition, the T&E Steering Committees are most often viewed as the means by which the community assesses needs, revises curriculum and develops standards for stu-

dent promotion, retention, and graduation.

TABLE II
Means of Facilitating Parental/Community Involvement

Areas of Involvment	Means of Involvement		
	T&E Steering Committee	Individual Parents	PTA/PA
1. Parents or other community members develop the goals of the local school.	7	2	5
2. Parents or other community members assess local educational needs.	7	3	3
3. Parents or other community members study the local school curriculum and work for needed changes.	6	3	3
4. Parents or other community members develop standards for students' promotion, retention, and graduation.	4	1	1
5. Parents or other community members receive social services through school referrals.	0	6	0
6. Parents or other community members help students with their assignments at home.	0	4	1
7. Parents or other community members assess the adequacy of the school's guidance program,	2	4	1
8. Parents or other community members come into the classroom to help students learn.	1	4	1
9. Parents or other community members participate in solving school-community problems.	1	1	4

2. Individual Parents, acting on their own behalf tend to be the most effective means by which they and other community members "receive social services through school referrals", "help students with their assignments at home," "assess the adequacy of the school's guidance program," and come into the classroom to help students learn."
3. Local PTA/PA's are most often mentioned as the way parents and other community members "participate in solving school-community problems."

This group of principals was also asked to consider the relationship between the schools and other municipal social service agencies. Specifically, they were asked, "In what ways do you believe the educational process can be improved by strengthening ties between the schools and other municipal agencies servicing youths and their families?" Their aggregate response suggests that much could be gained from an exchange of information and the sponsorship of after-school programs with agencies primarily concerned with health (both physical and mental), consumer education, employment, safety and recreation.

D. Municipal Officials' Interview

Ten prominent municipal officials were asked to express their views of the Paterson Public Schools. With one exception, all of the interviewees were residents of Paterson and have been associated

with the Paterson Municipal Government at least five years; four of them for ten or more years. Six of the respondents have served in their present position for five or more years.

Two of the six respondents who have school-aged children, do not send their children to the Paterson Public Schools. Five of those with school-aged children attest to knowing their children's teachers well enough to extend greetings on the street.

When asked how often they visited the schools their children attend, eight of the respondents say they either have not visited the schools recently or have done so, less than six times during the past year. Related to this is the reported fact that only 3 of the respondents know what is being done to promote and increase parental/community involvement in the schools. When asked to give illustrations, they cite after-school activities sponsored by the PTAs and Boy and Girl Scouts, Back-To-School nights, and guest speakers on community problems.

When asked to rate the quality of education in the Paterson Public Schools, seven of the interviewees rated it no higher than "fair", two said it is "good", and one said it is "very good" but not excellent.

It was difficult for some of the interviewees to identify any of Paterson's outstanding strengths. This is particularly evident among those who never visit the schools. This group identifies as strengths such factors as: good maintenance of the physical plants; the Dale Avenue Program; and "the kids'"

sense of pride in their schools. On the other hand, those who visit the schools even on rare occasions tend to list such strengths as:

"the dedicated and concerned teachers and principals"

"the K-5 schools with opportunities for small groupings and individualized instruction"

"the challenging level of the instructional materials"

"an informative student progress reporting system"

When asked to identify the Paterson Schools' greatest deficiencies, there is little difference in the responses of those who have and those who have not visited the schools. These municipal officials tend to cite a broad range of shortcomings, highlighting such things as:

"low student motivation and achievement in reading and writing skills"

"overcrowding at the high school level"

"inadequate after-school recreation programs"

"poor parental/community involvement"

Regarding the last point, the officials are just as likely to say the level of "community involvement will probably remain the same" as they are to say it "will probably improve in the future".

There are other deficiencies that were cited often enough by the respondents to warrant special mention. Several of the interviewees feel that the K-8 structure of the elementary

schools is a source of a number of other school-related problems. For one, the size of these schools is thought to make it difficult to maintain discipline or adequately address the needs of large, heterogeneous student bodies. As a consequence, the non-English speaking youngsters, in particular, tend to be ignored or overlooked, and the students of average ability are not receiving the work required to challenge and hold their interests and motivation at peak levels. Perhaps, it was suggested it is time to take another close look at the recommendations of the McCormick Report.[5]

Another concern expressed quite often had to do with the preparation and selection of school personnel for administrative positions. The district is said to be plagued with "social promotions." Several officials indicated that too many people advance into administrative posts who are not quite prepared. Once ensconced, they are rewarded with tenure, not for having encouraged innovation and creativity, "but for not having rocked the boat."

It was said that the professional staff is not appreciably rewarded for the pursuit of professional excellence. Consequently in a district which employs almost 1,600 professionals, there are fewer that three who hold doctorate degrees. It was alleged

---

[5] McCormick, Felix, J., The School Plant Needs of Paterson, New Jersey: 1967 Review Study, Teachers' College, Columbia University, New York, N.Y., 1968.

that the lack of professionalism shows to some extent in the reluctance of teachers and administrators to put in the time required to remedy long-standing problem situations. Several of the interviewees feel the district needs an incentive program which both encourages professional development, and pays a smaller staff higher salaries to encourage greater productivity.

When informed that a select group of principals feel that the educational processes can be improved by strengthening ties between the schools and certain municipal agencies, the interviewees suggested several ways to effect improvements through community involvement. They suggest that closer ties can be effected by:

> Changing the neighborhood school into a community school "service center" which houses many of the key agencies servicing youth and their families;
>
> Conducting after-school intra-mural recreation programs jointly sponsored by the Recreation Department and the Board of Education, using every school with a gymnasium both in the evenings and on weekends;
>
> Establishing a joint Board of Education - Recreation Department task force to study the recreational services of the entire city of Paterson;
>
> Utilizing the school buildings to conduct physical health examinations for members of the community;
>
> Using other mental health agency staffs to expand the child study teams' capacity;
>
> Using the PTA's/PA's to disseminate consumer information on a monthly basis;

Assigning more CETA personnel to the schools to coordinate employment programs;

Constructing a third high school that is geared toward vocational-technical careers.

Aside from the preceding suggestions, some of the interviewees felt that the principals were "coping-out," trying to get other agencies to do their work. It was said that perhaps principals would do better to concentrate on managing more effectively the resources under their direct control.

The interviewees feel that opportunities exist to affect closer working relationships with city agencies and private non-profit agencies funded, in part, by Community Development Grants. However, principals need to develop proposals to test the viability and availability of these resources. There is some speculation that the reason such proposals are not in the offing is that too many principals live outside of Paterson and are, therefore, not familiar with local available services. It was suggested that perhaps Superintendent Napier should designate someone to keep abreast of the services that are and/or could be made available through the schools and disseminate this information to the principals on a regular basis.

E. Summary of In-District Activities

The analysis of in-district activities reveals several central tendencies. The instructional staffs believe the general public has a negative view of the school system and that the middle-class residents of the community, in particular, are becoming disinclined to support public education locally.

These findings seem born out by the expressed opinions of some of Paterson's prominent municipal officials. The majority of those interviewed rate the quality of education in Paterson no higher than "fair." Further, a third of those with school-age children enroll them in non-public schools. The feeling is that the district has a number of severe deficiencies which overshadow its strengths and make it difficult to identify them in specific terms.

Community involvement is high on the list of deficiencies. The interviewees note that community involvement is at a low and they are just as likely to conclude that it will remain low as they are to say it will increase in the near future.

Although municipal officials believe community involvement is minimal, one should note that 83% of those with school-age children attest to knowing their children's teachers well enough to extend greetings on the street. This finding stands out in light of the observation that ten interviewees confess they rarely, if ever, visit schools.

Principals feel the district's educational program can be greatly improved if ties are strengthened between the schools and other municipal agencies. When told of this, municipal officials proposed several ways to effect such ties. They also expressed some doubts concerning the principals' desires to establish closer ties. They feel that opportunities now exist that are being ignored and/or underutilized.

There is some evidence to support this view. Principals admit that the community's involvement with their schools is minimal. To the extent that there is involvement, it seems mostly associated with goal development activities.

While the involvement of the community in school activities is quite low, principals feel that the situation should be changed. As a group they believe that community involvement should be present on a considerably more than "sometimes" scale, particularly in such areas as school-community problem-solving, needs assessment, curriculum revision, and goal development.

The principals who were particularly adept at securing "frequent" community involvement state that the individual parent is the most effective vehicle by which overall involvement in school-related activities is achieved. However, the PTA/PTOs are the best vehicles for solving school-community problems, and the T&E Steering Committees are best for involving parents in goal development, needs assessment, curriculum revision, and setting standards for students' promotion, retention, and graduation.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It appears that parental/community involvement in the Paterson Public School is not what it should be. With few exceptions, both principals and city officials agree that community involvement is low; practically non-existent. Further, some city officials believe the situation is likely to remain unchanged.

There is evidence, however, which suggests that the status quo is being altered. Perhaps this is most observable in the shift in attitude of school principals. For example, principals in Paterson now say that parents and other local residents should be frequently involved in needs assessments, curriculum revisions, and in setting standards for students' promotion, retention and graduation. Unfortunately, only a small number of principals have some idea of how best to involve the community in these and related activities. Their approach suggests that the extent and mode of community involvement is undergoing a dramatic transformation. Their approach further suggests that principals need to be trained to bring this about.

Another finding of this report is that there is a close association between the absence of direct involvement in the schools and a somewhat negative, unbalanced view of the school system. Those who rarely visit the schools have difficulty singling out the district's programmatic strengths. Secondary sources of information about what transpires in the district is not enough to overcome this even when these sources are educators with whom contact occurs outside of the schools. Informal influence networks seem unable to off-set the view that education in Paterson

is only concerned with widespread poor student achievement, violence and vandalism, and other crises publicized in the local media. It is clear that the community's attitude must be changed to effect meaningful, positive community involvement. A serious effort should be made, therefore, to promote a positive image of the district while broadening the range of in-school contacts between educators and the local citizenry.

Finally, this report indicates that Patersonians are familiar with the notion of expanded use of school facilities and inter-agency cooperation. The data indicate that residents who might not otherwise involve themselves in matters that directly affect the education of Paterson's youth, nevertheless, participate in programs that are housed in schools provided these programs are accessible and responsive to adult needs. Therefore, perhaps program activities of interest to adults should be held during and beyond the hours of 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The Paterson Public Schools need to develop innovative ways to accommodate both the School Impact and the Parent Impact models of community involvement.[6] Approaches which perhaps were once considered inappropriate should now be reevaluated in light of the major findings of this report. Certainly, suggested ways that municipal agencies can increase their ties with the schools should be considered. Accordingly, the Joint Program Planning Committee recommends the following courses of action:

---

[6]The School Impact Model and the Parent Impact Model are described on pages 6 and 7 of this report.

- First, that the President of the Board of Education, the Mayor, and the City Council President issue a joint policy statement to effect increased inter-agency cooperation.
- Second, that a plan be developed to increase the utilization of the schools in meeting the needs of adult residents of Paterson.
- Third, that a community Involvement Staff Development Program be initiated for principals.

A reminder before the last recommendation is presented, the primary purpose of Paterson's Partners for Progress Project is, "to familiarize key decision makers with the progress and prospects for improving education in Paterson." This can best be achieved by having city officials visit the schools. Therefore, the Joint Committee recommends that an invitation be extended to city officials to associate themselves more with the schools on a "first-hand" basis.

COMMENTS

An early draft of this report was shared with a select group of principals who were somewhat miffed by its findings. The principals felt that much was occurring in the district in relation to community involvement which apparently is unnoticed or unappreciated. They cited a number of events and activities which were exemplary of the Joint Committee's second recommendation.[7] However, they did not maintain that these were not exceptions to the rule. Accordingly, they expressed a willingness to make themselves available to plan programs which are responsive to their peers' need for community involvement staff development and training.

---

[7] See sample letter and announcements--appendices A through I.

APPENDIX

LIST OF APPENDICES

A. PIP Project Brochure

B. School #3: PELP Luncheon

C. School #3: Letter to Parents

D. School #4: Calendar of Events

E. Dale Avenue: Letter to Parents

F. Dale Avenue: Parent Volunteer Application

G. School #18: PTA Program

H. School #4: T & E Invitation

I. School #28: Letter to Parents

J. Principals' Survey Questionnaire

K. Principals' Follow-Up Questionnaire

I. Municipal Officials' Interview Guide

How you can help...

For one reason or another, some parents are unable to follow through with activities in the home. Because of this, the school system has assigned a Home-School Tutor to each of the twenty-four schools. In addition, the PTA Council will recruit Parent Volunteers to be part of the Pilot Parent Involvement Project.

Volunteers may work directly with children on a one-to-one basis on individual activities selected by the teacher from the Parent Activity Kit. They may also assist the teacher by organizing and coordinating the Parent Activities Kit, record keeping, and other operations that are essential to the Project's success.

Because PIP uses an individualized system and activities must be selected and coordinated for each individual child. It is recognized from the start that teachers will be unable to follow through on all details of the PIP by themselves. Thus, volunteer participation will be absolutely essential if the project is to succeed.

If you can give two hours or more a week during school time, you can be a tremendous help in making this new project work. To sign up, complete the following form and send it to your child's teacher or drop it off in the school office. Someone from PIP will contact you.

PARENT VOLUNTEER FORM

Name _____

Address _____

_____

Phone _____ Child's Age _____

THE PARENT INVOLVEMENT PROJECT HELPS YOUR CHILD DEVELOP

- Better Reading Skills
- Clearer Thinking
- Improved Math Skills
- Increased Word Comprehension
- Larger Vocabulary
- Clearer Communication Skills
- More Self-Confidence

and

- Better General Academic Performance

WAKE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

introduces the

PARENT INVOLVEMENT PILOT PROJECT

for
Grades One through Six

Appendix A

Background of the project...

During the past decade, a marked decline has been noted in the performance levels of children throughout the nation on standard tests of basic reading and mathematics skills. This has led many people to ask the question: *How can we improve basic skills education?* Concern about this question by parents, teachers, and administrators led the Wake County Public School System to develop and introduce a Basic Skills Monitoring Program during the 1976-77 school year.

Last year, the program was tried on a pilot basis in eleven elementary schools around the County. As the program went along, it became obvious that just reporting to parents was not enough. Parents needed more information if they were to help their children to improve in reading and math.

The Board of Education recognized this need, and last summer the Board made funds available so that 36 teachers selected from schools throughout the County could work together to develop activities that parents could use with their children to help improve their basic reading and math skills. These activities have been organized into the Parent Involvement Project (PIP). The new Program will be tried this school year on a pilot basis in 24 schools throughout the County.

During this trial period, the project will be closely monitored and evaluated to determine whether it has a significant impact on the development of basic skills.

How the project works...

The Parent Involvement Project is part of the Wake County Public School System's continuing commitment to improving basic skills education. It grows out of the Basic Skills Monitoring Program.

The Basic Skills Monitoring Program aims at helping each child to develop basic reading and math skills according to that child's own unique learning style and at the child's own rate of speed. Teachers in the program monitor the child's progress through a series of informal diagnostic activities and periodic standardized diagnostic tests. These show what skills the child has mastered and what skills the child will need next on the continuum of basic skills. The teacher is then able to plan school assignments on the basis of solid information about each child's level of performance.

Under PIP, the teacher next indicates the child's level on a performance checklist. This checklist is keyed to an index of activities that can be done at home to help the child. The teacher gives the checklist to an aide or a volunteer who then goes to the index, called the Parent Activity Kit, and picks out those Parent Activity Cards that are keyed to that child's level of performance. Consumable copies of the Parent Activity Cards are sent home with the child.

Parents then use the cards to plan activities in and around the home that will help the child to develop reading and math skills according to his or her individual needs.

How parents can build basic skills...

Research has shown that what happens at home has a big effect on how children do in school. Here are three ways you can help your child to be a better student.

READING - Set aside a time each day for you to read to your child. It should be away from outside interference, especially TV or radio noise. This should be a time just for reading. If your child is older, have the child read to you. Pay attention. Be interested. Help if the child has trouble understanding a word, but don't be too quick to prompt. Give the child time to work it out. Above all, be positive and encouraging. Let your child know you are interested.

MATH - Get the child involved in household math. With young children, encourage them to do simple counting, addition, and subtraction. With older children, activities such as handling money, doing simple cost problems, or measurement can be a big help in developing math skills. Here too, be positive and encouraging. Be patient, and above all, don't be over critical.

ACTIVITY CARDS - If your child's teacher sends home a Consumable Parent Activity Card, this is the teacher's way of telling you exactly how you can help your child. Be sure to follow up by doing the suggested activity as it is explained on the card.

REMEMBER: If you follow these few simple suggestions, you can be a real help to your child in mastering the basic skills.

Appendix #B

Parents were invited to this luncheon

SPRING IS HERE

AND ...

WE WANT YOU HERE FOR LUNCH

date -- Thursday, May 3
time -- 11:00 a.m. to —
place -- school #3 gym
program- discussion on DISCIPLINE
led by psychologist Bill Kopcho
given by- the PELP FAMILY- Paterson Early Learning Program

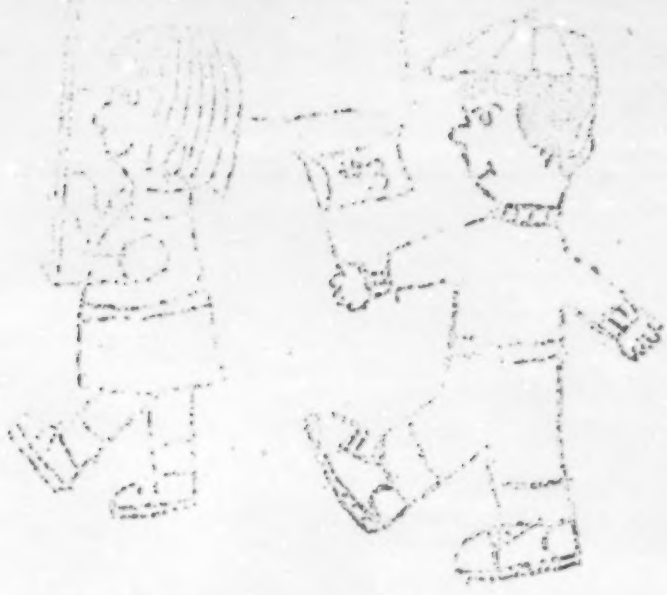
Please return this portion by Tuesday, May 1st

Name—

I will come for lunch

I will be unable to attend

BOLETIN No. 3
"VOCERO DE MIS COMPAÑEROS"
Noviembre 21, 1977



El Director y los Profesores de la Escuela No. 3 aprovechan esta oportunidad para darles las gracias a los padres que nos visitaron el Lunes 14 de noviembre por la noche. Las cosas muy complejas por las cuales estamos pasando actualmente. Esperamos contar aquí con el 100% de los padres el próximo año.

Sabemos que ustedes serán bien recibidos cuando vayan a visitarnos. Hagamos los arreglos una vez más (a) (la) semana, (o) cuando ellos (ellas) se estén familiarizando con los niños. Ustedes entran después que nosotros les abrimos las puertas a los niños de ocho.

La Junta de Educación tiene acostumbrado tener las notas el primer jueves de cada mes a las 8:00 de la noche en la Oficina de la Junta de Educación en el No. 5 de Calle Dr. [illegible] noche anterior el Boletín de Notas también estará para el público.

Actualmente la Junta de Educación está preparando el presupuesto de 1978-79. Habrá una reunión el día 29 de noviembre a las 4:30 P.M. y otra el día 12 de diciembre a las 7:30 P.M. Se necesita el consejo de los padres, ya que la cantidad de dinero que se utilizará en años será determinada por el presupuesto. En la Junta de Educación, [illegible] decidido [illegible] y de la Universidad [illegible] sobre todo nuevo año.

[illegible] tengan que [illegible] y estén [illegible] de seguir mejorando el [illegible] que [illegible] para [illegible] sueño alguno lo ser un [illegible] [illegible].

DATES TO CIRCLE ON THE CALENDAR

May 9, 1979 Wednesday

R.I.F. 1st Distribution
Auditorium 1:15 P.M. - 2:15 P.M.

June 6, 1979 (Wednesday)

Fashion Show - School No. Four Auditorium

10:00 A.M. - Presented by Home Economic Department (Mrs. Fuller)

June 18, 1979 (Monday)

Awards Assembly - 10:00 A.M. - School Auditorium

June 19, 1979 (Tuesday)

Graduation - 9:00 A.M. - School Auditorium
Parents and Adults

LAST DAY OF SCHOOL - June 20, 1979
(All Students)

DALE AVENUE SCHOOL
21 Dale Avenue
Paterson, New Jersey

_____

Dear Parents,

I have noticed that your son/daughter needs additional practice in certain reading/math skills. In an effort to help your child improve I am sending home practice sheets that stress the skill needed.

Would you please assist me in helping your child by spending a few minutes working with your son/daughter on these materials.

Thank you for your anticipated cooperation.

Sincerely,

_____
Teacher

_____
Principal

Packets of skills sent home.

Appendix #F

OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL
DALE AVENUE SCHOOL
PATERSON, NEW JERSEY 07505

Application for Parent Volunteer

Name of Applicant

Address of Applicant

Telephone Number of Applicant

Describe experience you may have had in working with children.

What interests or hobbies do you have that may be helpful in working with children?

Signature of Applicant

Recommended for Work in Area
Number of Years Known or How Related as Reference

Days and Time Available:

Monday	from	o'clock to	o'clock
Tuesday	from	o'clock to	o'clock
Wednesday	from	o'clock to	o'clock
Thursday	from	o'clock to	o'clock
Friday	from	o'clock to	o'clock

Circular No. 15-B
5-2-67

DONERS

Casa Espanola
Cake Specialty
Hydro Craft Studios
Plaza Liquors
Petrosi's Lounge
Gertrude Byer
Winthrop Furniture
Rainbow Party Supply
Home Savings Outlet
Harold's Jewelry
James Phillips Furniture
Mennella's Poultry
Britt
Continental Headwear
Person Barnet
Milmont Furniture
Murray's
Joyeria
El Dorado Furniture
Mireille Botique
Eagle Furniture
Mischler's Jewelers
Theatre Management Associates
Coronet
N. Y. Racing Corp.
Fanny Farmer
Kampfire Co.
De Luccia Funeral Home
Third Ave Deli
Reither Liquors
Glass Managerie
Mc Master's Florist
Riverside Floral Inc.
Halliwells's Florist
Broschi
Alvarez Florist
Howard's Florist
People's Park Florist
Tom's Florist
Jon's Florist
Flower House
Point After Beauty Shop
Raphael
Butterfly Beauty
Cover Girl Beauty
Michele Arnold
Paterson Lamp Shade
Bonfire Resturant
Main Auto Parts
Congressman Robert Roe
Alvino's Jewelers
Lankering Cigar
Colon's Hardware
Vin Cove Liquors

And to all the many teachers and parents and friends.

Homemade
Handmade Items

Connie Anfuso
Toni Apparisio
Marilyn Sanderson
Helen Funicello

THE PTA OF
P.S. 18 PRESENTS

CHINESE AUCTION
&
DINNER

Bethwood - March 30 - 6^{30} p.m.

Appendix #H

October

Parent

Information

News

T and E (Through and Efficient) prevails in Public School Number Four but parents are wanted and needed to assist the school in reviewing the district objectives and standards as well as to assist in planning program objectives to meet the needs of the students enrolled in our school (P.S. #4).

Please complete the form and return it to school:

Name_____

Address_____

Telephone Number_____ _____

Day available M T W T F (circle) Time available Indicate:_____

Appendix #I

PATERSON BOARD OF EDUCATION
Office of the Principal
Public School No. 28

April 26, 1979

Dear Parents:

I cordially invite you to attend a very important P.T.A. meeting on Monday, April 30, 1979 at 7:30 P.M. in the school auditorium.

The P.T.A. officers have planned an exciting program for the meeting. I'm sure you don't want to miss it!

Please be reminded that all of our students will take the California Achievement Test (CAT) the week of April 30, 1979. We are suggesting that each child has a restful night and is prepared to do his/her best work. I'm sure you'll join us in striving for positive results as our children grow and learn. This is only possible with your help.

Your enthusiastic participation is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Fred L. Sullivan

Fred L. Sullivan
Principal

FLS:stb

APPENDIX J

PATERSON'S PARTNERS FOR PROGRESS
COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

School # _____

Principal _____

For each item below, please indicate your opinion as to a) how often each activity does occur in your school and b) how often each activity should occur in your school. For each of your responses, please use the following 4-point rating scale: 1 = never, 2 = rarely, 3 = sometimes, 4 = frequently.

	a. Does occur	b. Should occur
1. Parents or other community members study the local school curriculum and work for needed changes.	( )	( )
2. Parents or other community members assess local educational needs.	( )	( )
3. Parents or other community members develop the goals of the local school.	( )	( )
4. Parents or other community members help secure teaching materials and other resources.	( )	( )
5. Parents or other community members assess the adequacy of the school's physical plant and equipment.	( )	( )
6. Parents or other community members establish student disciplinary procedures.	( )	( )
7. Parents or other community members influence the allocation and expenditure of school funds.	( )	( )
8. Parents or other community members assure that the special-need pupils are being serviced.	( )	( )
9. Parents or other community members receive social services through school referrals.	( )	( )
10. Parents or other community members participate in solving school-community problems.	( )	( )

PATERSON'S PARTNERS FOR PROGRESS
PARENT/COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Please indicate, in your opinion, which means presently exist to facilitate parental/community involvement in the areas listed below. For each of your responses, place an "X" in the box that appropriately joins a) an area of involvement, and b) a means for involvement.

Areas of Involvement	Means of Involvement											
	Individual Parents	PTA/PA	Title I PAC	Community volunteers	T&E Steering Committee	Board of Education	Parallel Programs	Map & Rap	Headstart	Follow-Through	Teacher Corps Community Council	Other
1. Parents or other community members study the local school curriculum and work for needed changes.												
2. Parents or other community members assess local educational needs.												
3. Parents or other community members help students with their assignments at home.												
4. Parents or other community members develop the goals of the local school.												
5. Parents or other community members develop standards for students' promotion, retention, and graduation.												

APPENDIX K

PATERSON'S PARTNERS FOR PROGRESS
PARENT/COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Please indicate, in your opinion, which means presently exist to facilitate parental/community involvement in the areas listed below. For each of your responses, place an "X" in the box that appropriately joins a) an area of involvement, and b) a means for involvement.

Areas of Involvement	Means of Involvement											
	Individual Parents	PTA/PA	Title I PAC	Community volunteers	T&E Steering Committee	Board of Education	Parallel Programs	Map & Rap	Headstart	Follow-Through	Teacher Corps Community Council	Other
6. Parents or other community members assess the adequacy of the school's guidance program.												
7. Parents or other community members assess the adequacy of the school's physical plant and equipment.												
8. Parents or other community members participate in solving school-community problems.												
9. Parents or other community members develop standards of professional excellence.												
10. Parents or other community members come into the classroom to help students learn.												
11. Parents or other community members receive social services through school referrals.												
12. Other												

APPENDIX L

PARENTAL/COMMUNITY INVOLVMENT INTERVIEW GUIDE

Municipal Official _____

Partners Interviewer _____

1. How long have you been associated with the Paterson Municipal Government? _____

2. How long have you held your present position? _____

3. Are you a resident of Paterson? _____ YES _____ NO

4. Do you have school-age children? _____ YES _____ NO

5. How often do you visit your child's school? _____ never;

_____ once a year; _____ two to five times a year;
_____ six to ten times a year; _____ ten or more times a year

6. Do you know your child's teacher well enough to greet him/her on the street? _____ YES _____ NO

7. How would you rate the quality of education in the Paterson Schools? _____ excellent _____ very good _____ good
_____ fair _____ poor

8. What are the Paterson Schools' outstanding strengths? _____

A) _____

B) _____

C) _____

9. What are the Paterson Schools greatest deficiencies? _____

A) _____

B) _____

C) _____

10. Do you know what is being done to promote and increase parental/community involvement in the schools? _____YES _____NO

(illustrations)_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

11. In the near future, do you feel parental/community involvement:

_____will probably improve; _____ will probably remain the same;

_____ will probably get worse

12. Recently, a representative group of principals were asked in what ways they thought the educational process could be improved by strengthening ties between the schools and other municipal agencies servicing youth and their families. They indicated that much could be gained by a closer working relationship with those agencies primarily concerned with Health (both physical and mental), consumerism, employment, safety, and recreation.

In what ways, if any, do you think closer ties between the Paterson Schools and the municipal agencies providing the above services can be effected.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Comments:

Thank you.